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## UNCLE JACOB'S WIFE.

We were sitting round the breakfast-table, my father, mother, brother Tom, two sisters, and myself, one winter's morning, when the letters came in, nearly an hour late, for, contrary to the custom of many country places, we had an eight-o'clock delivery.

'Postman says, sir, that the roads are frozen so slippery, that he had to leave his horse at a farmhouse, and walk over with the bag,' said James apologetically, as he laid the letters by my father's plate.

'There's always something wrong,' said my father with a shrug, 'when I am expecting important letters.'

'Give the man a glass of beer,' said my mother, as James left the room.

The girls smiled to each other at the lofty sound, 'important letters,' though, to be sure, the prices of oats, wheat-straw, and potatoes were very important matters in our father's eyes. We, however, cared little whether sheep ruled at heavy rates, pigs were lively, or turnips dull, for it did not seem to make much matter to us whether the markets were up or down, my father never making money in either case. It is not wonderful, therefore, that we should have lost our interest in farming details.

My mother used to take these little misfortunes very quietly. 'Your father will never make his fortune, my dears,' she would say with as pleasant a face as possible. 'He isn't the man to do it, even by accident; but as long as he gets enough out of the farm to let us live comfortably and want for nothing, I think we ought to be content; and then, you know, there's Uncle Jacob to fall back on.'

'If my father would just pitch that scientific nonsense of his on one side, he would soon make the farm pay: I wish chemistry had never been invented,' was Tom's irreverent opinion; and as far as regards my father's application of science to the working of our farm, Tom was practically right. My mother supported my father's views with all

her might, but as Tom said: 'My mother would be ready to see snow in August, if my father saw it.' And this was as it should be, and she and my father had the full comfort of their unanimity.

'Tom, my dear,' said my mother one day, when he was trying to persuade her to give her voice against one of his father's newest notions, 'I would not oppose your father's opinion for almost any consideration. We should save twenty pounds, you think, on the five-acre field, if we were to'—

'Yes, certainly; quite twenty pounds,' interrupted Tom.

'But your father would not be pleased, and I would pay twenty pounds any day (if I had it), rather than have him vexed.'

'The day will come, mother, when you won't be able to afford it: it's quick work going downhill. One comfort is, however, if the worst comes to the worst, we have Uncle Jacob to fall back on some day.'

But we have wandered from the breakfast-table. My father glanced through a couple of letters, which didn't seem to please him much.

'Read that from Jacob,' said my mother, pointing to one.

'How do you know it's from Jacob?' asked my father, always a little jealous if he thought his letters were in any way scrutinised, even to the reading of a post-mark.

'I see his writing across the table,' said my mother meekly. Here she touched another weak point of my father's: he was the slightest bit envious of her better sight.

'It will wait,' he said, and chipped at his egg. But the touch of spleen was but momentary, and he presently broke Uncle Jacob's red seal.

'He is coming here,' he said, without looking up.

'He will be welcome,' said my mother, and my father read on. He always read straight through a letter before enlightening us. Suddenly his face changed. He turned pale, absolutely white, he whose complexion was like that of one of his own ruddy apples; his hand shook, too, and he threw down the letter.

'What is it? Is he dead?' asked my mother in her fright, forgetting that she was looking at his writing.

'Worse than dead!' said my father.

'What has he done?' we three girls exclaimed in a breath. 'Is it very bad?' for my father's face was a picture.

'Pshaw!' said my father, and his colour came back as he spoke; 'he's going to be married.'

'Married!'

'Married!'

'Married!' We all pronounced the dreadful word, and then there was silence, and we thought much and said little. The matter, in fact, was beyond speech.

'There go your fortunes, girls!' said Tom, breaking silence, with a look that reminded me of his old mischievous school-boy days.

'Hold your tongue, sir!' thundered my father.

'I must say I think it inconsiderate of Jacob, highly inconsiderate,' said my mother, but something in her voice pleaded for Uncle Jacob as she spoke; she was such an unreasoning sort of woman, my mother, in her habit of leaning to mercy's side.

'Inconsiderate? Disgraceful!' said my father.

'Yes, my dear Charles, very disgraceful,' said my mother; but I caught the same tone of appeal in her voice.

'Shameful! Ridiculous! Unheard of!' My father was given to the piling of epithets. 'Pitiable in a man of his age!'

'He is old to marry,' said my mother.

'Old! Only think of it. I am sixty-seven, and he is not two years younger.'

'I suppose he was very lonely.'

'Why could he not have come here, then?'

'His business, my dear,' said my mother. 'I suppose he cannot leave his office in town for long.'

'Why not have asked one of the girls to go and live with him? if he was lonely. Lonely! nonsense! The man has no more feeling of loneliness or anything else than a dried stick. Lonely!'

'It seems a pity,' said the gentle voice of the gentlest of all gentlewomen.

'You don't appreciate the case at all, Mary! The old goose! So, nothing but marrying will serve his turn—and all out of spite too! Well, he is bringing a fine lot of cares on his shoulders, and so he'll find. There's an end to his quiet life now. The trouble of a wife!—Here my father checked himself, seeing something perhaps in my mother's face.

'No, Mary; I didn't mean that! You know I did not. You and I have pulled together without a rub for five-and-thirty years. Why, Polly, what are you thinking of?' She did not speak, but I always thought my mother's smile was better than words. I am sure my father thought so too. Her smile was known to us all to be the sunlight under which the sour parts of his nature ripened to sweet.

'I wonder what she is like?' queried Tom, unluckily giving utterance to the thought that was seething in our girlish minds.

'Stuff, sir! What does it matter?' said my father, effervescing again. 'A designing woman, no doubt: designing women are all alike.'

'She must be uncommonly sharp,' said Tom.

The moment my father left the table, our pent-up feelings had free play, and we relieved ourselves

by much conversation, my mother playing the part of moderator.

'I think your uncle has a right to please himself,' she said as she left the room to attend to her household duties. Perhaps he had. People are not to be deprived of this right because they are old and rich, and have a circle of nephews and nieces expectant of solid remembrances in their wills. No—certainly not; but still it cannot be denied but that this news fell hardly on us; we had made so sure, you see. But I have not described Uncle Jacob. This is easily done, though, there being very little of him to describe. He was a little man, not over five feet six, certainly with a little neat small figure, surmounted by rather a long head. Uncle Jacob was a long-headed man in every sense of the word. His features were hard and small. I mean that they looked physically hard—wooden, for the expression of the face was good. His hands were hard and small too; in fact, the second finger of the right hand, where the pen leans, seemed turned to very bone. He was my father's only brother, and had been sent out early in life with fifteen hundred pounds in his pocket to make his own way in the world, when my father, as the eldest son, had inherited the freehold farm we live on.

With my father, time had stood still, so to speak; he was no richer and no poorer now at sixty-seven than he had been forty years before; but things had been different with my uncle. He might sit down at the ink-stained desk in the little mouldy office in Mincing Lane, and take his hard pen into those small hard fingers of his, and write his hard name in the crabbedst of hands, and the cheque he wrote it on would be worth three hundred and twenty thousand pounds. So Mr Sneek, his clerk, would say with a triumphant look to his familiars. As for Uncle Jacob, he never spoke about the state of his affairs: his mind was tight and trim, and self-contained like himself.

Now, Uncle Jacob had never spoken a word of leaving us sixpence, but we built our hopes on the circumstances of the case, and very reasonably so, I think. He had not a single relation in the world outside our house. He had always been kind to us in his way, paying Tom's school-bills, and sending my mother presents of the quaintest ornaments that could well be seen. He was really fond of her, in his undemonstrative way, and had told my father confidentially several times that she was an 'excellent woman.' On one occasion, too, my father had been lamenting in his presence that we girls could have no fortunes.

'Tom must have the farm, of course, and then if he marries?' my father had said; and Uncle Jacob had said: 'Don't fret yourself about their fortunes.'

There was no promise in the words certainly—that is, no promise expressed—but did not an implied one lurk there so slightly hidden as to be seen? We thought so, and rejoiced and made merry over it, and made sure of our fortunes from that day forward.

'I wonder if he will ask us to the wedding?' said Nettie, the youngest and liveliest of us all, as we sat together over the fire in the work-room.

'He may spare himself the trouble,' said Jane.

'In any case, it would not be wise to offend him,' I observed.

'It doesn't signify whether he is offended or not,' said Jane with a toss. 'His wife will take care of him now.'

'I should dearly like to be asked,' said Nettie.

'Why?'

'Why, Kate, it would be such rare fun!'

'Fun?' said I. 'I do believe you think of nothing but fun, Nettie; and, after all, it will be very poor fun for us, this marriage.'

'He will look so odd! Think of the little wee man in his green coat, with his shining bald head, with his bridegroom's white gloves on, and a rose in his button-hole, putting the ring on her finger (he must have his spectacles on to do it properly), and saying all those things he will have to say. Oh, how romantic he will look! How ever can she find it in her heart to marry him!' And Nettie broke into one of her merry peals of laughter. 'Such an old fright! How can she!'

'She sees him through a golden mist,' Jane said. 'I should so dearly like to see it!—the wedding!'

'If you go, you may go by yourself,' said Jane. 'I do think you are like a child in some things still, Nettie, and yet you are twenty-two.'

'I shall never forget that fact, dear, you remind me so often; but when I think of your age, I feel quite like a child; thirty-five sounds quite important after my two-and-twenty. No, Jane, never mind, I'm sorry I said it; it was spiteful of me. Don't be vexed this time, and I'll never say a word about your age again.' And Nettie put her mouth into such a pleading shape, that Jane could not have been angry if she had tried. A late learned prelate tells us, in an erratic offspring of his genius, that a little *nez retroussé* has had power before this to reverse the destinies of an empire. I wonder what his verdict on Nettie's mouth would have been. I know she ruled us like a little queen—my father included; and I think her power was in her mouth. There was silence for a while, and our needles sped fast.

'I wonder if she is young or old?' Nettie broke out.

'Young, of course,' said Jane. 'Silly old men are always taken in by girls young enough to be their grand-daughters. Do you suppose he is going to marry an old woman?'

'Of course she's young,' I said.

'I shouldn't have thought he would have noticed one way or the other,' said Nettie laughing.

'Hush!' said Jane; 'here's my father coming.'

'Nettie,' said my father entering, 'come into my writing-room; I want you to copy me some letters—I am going out.'

'Very well,' said Nettie: 'only mind, papa dear, you are not to be cross if I make mistakes. That's to be your part of the bargain. Now, come and shew me.'

Before a week passed, my father had another letter from Uncle Jacob, naming the wedding-day, but not asking any of us to be present.

'Although he invites himself here, in the coolest manner possible, the fortnight after,' said my father.

'I would fill the house, sir; ask the Jenkinsons and young Clive here, and tell him there wasn't room,' was Tom's sapient rejoinder.

'And make his wife an enemy for life,' said Jane.

My father shortly enjoined Tom to keep his ideas to himself—so he had evidently decided to receive the visit.

The next question mooted was, whether Uncle Jacob would expect wedding-presents to be sent by his only relations. After much argument, it was decided that he would, so we girls set to work at

once. I worked a most elaborate handkerchief for the future Mrs Jacob, and enclosed it in the most perfect of sachets. Tom rode into Worcester, and bought a case of prettily cut and topped scent-bottles—a gem of its kind—for her toilet; into which piece of complaisance, however, it took us a whole morning's work to persuade him. Jane shone conspicuous in the manufacture of a workbag; but Nettie, naughty Nettie, set to work on the braiding of a most striking waistcoat for Uncle Jacob himself. In vain we pleaded that he could never be induced to commit himself to the wearing of so very ornamental an article.

'He shall wear it,' she said: 'he ought to be gay on his wedding-day. This will smarten him up from a dingy old moth to a butterfly. He won't know himself.' My father saw her at her work, and asked who it was for.

'Uncle Jacob,' said Nettie boldly; and when my father looked amazed, she fairly laughed in his face. 'He will look very nice in it.' My father was not equal to the occasion, and turned away. As to commanding or exhorting Nettie, when she was minded to go her own way, he would just as soon have thought of using his loaded stick to flip a butterfly off one of his roses. Nettie knew this, and when we threatened her, she would laugh, and say: 'No, he won't! He won't say a word; he'll lift his eyebrows at me—so—and that's all.'

What my father's present to Uncle Jacob was, we never knew, as he has been grimly silent on the subject from that day to this.

The wedding-day passed, and the fortnight's honeymoon passed, and the bride and groom were to be with us next day (roads permitting). It really was pleasant, their coming so soon, for our curiosity had been raised to the highest pitch, and had as yet had nothing to allay it—not a single particular as to the young lady's age, looks, manners, accomplishments, nay, nor even her name. My mother had thought to write to Uncle Jacob, asking a few questions as to these matters, 'to shew just a little kindly interest,' she said, but had not done it, my father having looked things unutterable at the bare idea.

My mother, in her motherly heart, began to pity the bride, as the hour came for the carriage to be heard crunching the frost up the drive.

'She is sure to be nervous, poor thing. Mind you meet her kindly, girls. It is not her fault about the fortune, poor thing; I dare say she knows nothing about it.'

In one of my mother's pauses came the sound of wheels, and we went in a body to the hall—all of us except my father, who kept out of the way, wishing to meet the happy pair privately. Nearer and nearer came the carriage-wheels, and we opened the hall-door, and stood just inside in the biting cold air, as the green carriage, bay horses, and yellow postboy came to the steps. She was tall—the bride—\_inches taller than Uncle Jacob, tall and slight, and dressed in dark rich colours, but with so thick a veil down that we could not even make a guess at her face, not even when she kissed us, for she only raised the corner, and let it down again. She was timid, no doubt, as my mother had said.

'Come in, dear aunt, by the fire.'

'You must both be half frozen.'

'You are an hour later than we hoped you would be.'

'Dear Uncle Jacob, let Tom take your coat.' Civil things we said of that sort, and finally marshalled our dear relatives to the fireside in the morning-room.

'Stir the fire well in Mrs Jacob's bedroom before she goes up stairs,' said my mother to the maid as she left the room, 'and take up the spiced negus when I ring.—It is a great preservative from cold, negus as we make it,' said my mother, turning to our aunt in an explanatory manner.

'Thank you,' said the veiled lady. Uncle Jacob in the meantime had taken the poker in hand, and was 'mending the fire,' as he called it, to such purpose that his yellow-brown face became suffused with ardent crimson, and we kept moving our chairs backwards half a foot at a time.

'Yes,' he said, replying to my mother; 'it was' (poke), 'it was cold' (poke). 'The roads were' (scrape of the lower bar) 'like glass' (crash of the upper crust), 'and we crept along slowly.'

'Will she never lift her veil?' pondered I, and caught myself wandering off into musings about the mythical 'Pig-faced Lady,' and her rich veil, never drawn aside for human eyes to gaze behind. What if my uncle had been tempted by visions of enormous wealth to marry—a what? Before I had decided as to the sort of ugliness, my aunt raised her veil, and I came back to everyday life.

She raised her veil, and we all looked at her. Nettie made some excuse, and fled from the room, but I could hear her laughter at the end of the hall.

I think even my mother was startled by the swarthy, gaunt face revealed. It was a Scotch face evidently, for the salient points of Scotch physiognomy were almost caricatured, they were so strongly pronounced. The high cheek-bones might have belonged to a Tartar.

'Are you warm enough to go up stairs?' my mother asked her, with a tremor of surprise in her gentle tones.

'You must speak out to her,' said Uncle Jacob, with a curious quiver in the corner of his mouth.

'Out?' my mother asked.

'Yes, loud;' and again the quiver. 'Janet!' and he moved closer to his wife, 'Mary wants to know if you are ready to go up stairs?' He spoke in loudest tones.

'What?' she said, turning an ear as deaf as Dame Eleanor Spearing's. 'Up stairs?'

'Yes. Will you go and take your things off?'

'Yes, I am ready, quite ready, thank you;' and she turned to my mother, and rose from her seat.

'Ring for the negus,' my mother bade me.—'Janet, let me carry your cloak,' she said in a desperate voice; but Aunt Janet was evidently dubious of her meaning till my mother had taken possession of that article.

'Uncle,' said Tom, 'I'll shew you your dressing-room.'

'What on earth can he have done it for?' whispered Tom as he passed me.

Jane and I were left together, and Nettie came back when she heard them pass up stairs.

'O Nettie, why did you laugh in the hall?' I asked.

'She wouldn't hear it,' said Nettie; 'and you know Uncle Jacob's always a little deaf.'

'You will be getting us into a scrape, indeed, if you don't take care.'

'Not I. Oh, what a bride!'

'She is an odd-looking creature,' said Jane.

'Fifty at least.'

'We shall be as hoarse as rooks with shouting to her, if they stay for a week,' said Jane.

'What a sight the courtship must have been! Poor Uncle Jacob must have made love under difficulties indeed: the whole neighbourhood must have been as wise as himself. How ever could he have managed it!' and Nettie burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter, in which we both joined. In the height of our merriment, Aunt Janet entered the room. It was well she was so deaf, or she might have heard what would have vexed her.

James and the parlour-maid waited on us at dinner in a state of much amazement. Their eyes seemed to be fascinated to her, however much they might try to look the other way. James was quite nervous, too, poor man, and absolutely jumped every now and then when my father roared out a piece of politeness to the lady by his side; but he did his best. He did not attempt to shout to her, for he was so proper-minded a footman, that he would have died rather than lift his voice and bellow in the unseemly manner required; so he employed dumb-show—lifting up her wine-glass to her notice first, and then holding sherry and Sauterne before her in a beseeching manner, that she might elect between them. Nettie watched him gravely, but unluckily her eyes caught mine, and a spasm of silent laughter passed over her face. She did not laugh, however, and her potato did not choke her, so all was well. The evil moment was only deferred, however, for Aunt Janet bethought herself of the bag that hung by her side, and drawing thence a tube with bone, ear, and mouth pieces fitted thereto, she said to my mother: 'Please, use my tube, and I shall hear you;' and uncoiled it as she spoke.

'Take that end to your mistress,' said my father to James; but never did tyro taking electric wire in hand look more uncomfortable than did James as he handled the unknown instrument. He seemed to expect a shock as he half-dropped it by my mother's plate.

'Gently!' said Aunt Janet, who had the other end in her ear, and James started worse than ever. No help for it; Nettie must laugh; but with great skill she succeeded in producing a violent fit of coughing that made the tears run down her cheeks.

My father explained the cause of my uncle's marriage to us in the evening after our guests had retired.

'She was Samuel Marten's only child,' he began. 'His partner's?' said my mother.

'Yes. When he told me that much, I saw daylight at once. Old Marten died in India over a year ago, and she came home.'

'That makes her so brown,' said Nettie. 'I thought she had an Indian sort of look.'

'Her fortune, of course, is very large; and not knowing into what hands she might fall, he thought it would be well to marry her; and she, as a woman of sense, saw the wisdom of the step. Jacob has acted a very sensible part; so now all that remains is for us to be civil to her: she deserves it.'

'Did he say anything about her deafness, papa?'

'No, child. Why should he?'

'Did you?'

'Nonsense! What does it signify? He'll only lead the quieter life for it. A wife's tongue—Now, Mary,' said he, looking at my mother—'now, Mary, you know what I mean.'



'I was not saying anything, dear,' said my mother; she led my father in a chain of silk, that was as strong as iron. What a wonder it is that women should ever be ignorant as to where lies the secret of their strength. How few men can resist the might of gentleness! My mother's gentle craft was partly natural, partly won loyally from the Holy Book that teaches so fully of the 'soft answer' that is stronger than triple shield against the thrust of wrath.

After a day or two, Aunt Janet took up the habit of coming to the morning-room directly after breakfast, and spending the whole forenoon there. At first, we were rather a silent party after she appeared. No matter how deaf your companion is, it is generally some time before you can cast off the mistaken idea that half of what you say is heard; and Aunt Janet had such a sharp sort of look about her—unlike the patient, waiting look that deaf people usually acquire—that we were absurdly silent in her presence for a while.

Nettie broke the ice first, and made some remarks as to Aunt Janet's personal appearance; but when I started, and looked at the poor lady's face, it was evident that all sounds fell idly alike on those dead ears of hers. 'Do you know I like her,' said Nettie abruptly one morning, when my mother was urging us to be more attentive. 'Of course, she's the greatest old fright that ever was seen; but she is kindly and good-hearted, I am sure.'

My mother looked pained. 'Nettie, don't speak of your aunt so. Never mind her looks: she cannot help them.'

'I suppose she cannot, mamma, and yet a sort of instinct makes me blame people for being ugly.'

'It isn't her face I mind,' said Jane, who had taken a strong dislike to our aunt; 'but her voice is dreadful. Her voice is like the tearing of calico, and sets my very teeth on edge.' Our aunt was sitting knitting quietly by the fire all this time.

'She cannot help her voice,' said my mother: 'you should try and look at people's pleasant side, Jane.'

'I don't think she has a pleasant side.'

My mother made no answer, but turned and shouted a little of the morning news from the paper, to amuse our aunt. Presently Tom entered.

'Nettie, look here; there is a great hole in my pocket. Will you sew it up for me?'

'Yes; only come closer. Now, stand still—do stand still, Tom, dear—I am pricking my finger.'

'How long is she going to stay?' asked Tom.

'As long as she pleases,' my mother replied.

'How on earth do you manage to amuse such a living statue? I would not be one of you girls shut up in a room with her morning after morning, for something. She would mesmerise me.'

'You pain me, Tom, when you speak so. There is nothing attractive about your aunt; but I am sure she is a very worthy person, and deserving of your respect,' said my mother.

'What! for hooking the old gentleman?'

'Tom,' said Nettie, 'do you think that is Aunt Janet's hair, or a wig?' (in a confidential tone.)

'A wig, to be sure,' said Tom determinedly.

'I cannot bear it, Tom,' said my mother; 'you must really go out of the room.—Come, Nettie, and shew your aunt some of your water-colours. I daresay she likes looking at drawings.'

'She looks like a judge,' said sarcastic Jane.

Nettie went to the piano after a while, and sang

a ballad or two of Balfe's and Lindley's, sliding out of them into some Scotch airs, which she sang uncommonly well. I was watching Aunt Janet's uninterested face as Nettie sang, and thinking, with some pity, how great a privation hers was, when Nettie struck the first bar of *Ye Banks and Braes*, and a change swept across the immobile face for an instant, as if she heard—at least, I mean that for a second I fancied so, for as I looked, the face was dull-deaf as ever.

'Poor thing!' said my mother, 'how I wish she could hear those sweet Scotch airs!'

'I should not think it would make much difference to her,' said Jane. 'I don't suppose she is inclined to be romantic.'

Two or three days afterwards, my father came into the morning-room just before lunch, and seeing Aunt Janet, was about to withdraw. 'I wanted to tell you'—he said to my mother.

'Tell me what, dear?'

'Nothing—but that Jacob told me they are going on Thursday. He is getting fidgety at being away from the office so long.'

'Janet spoke about going to me this morning.'

'Well, I hope you have kept her amused. She must be conciliated at any cost. We must have them again soon, though I hate the sight of her. I really cannot enjoy my dinner in the least, shouting out as I must between every mouthful. But it cannot be helped.'

'I like her,' said my mother: 'she is quiet and sensible,' as my father moved back out of the doorway.

Thursday morning came, and our guests were to leave us. Uncle Jacob was particularly kind in his manner to us all, telling Nettie and me that we must come and pay our aunt a visit in town after they moved into their new house in Hyde Park Gardens.

'You shall see all that is to be seen, as your aunt means to keep a carriage,' he said kindly, and we thanked him as in duty bound; but I don't think we either of us felt inclined to venture on our new aunt's hospitality.

We all went up stairs with Aunt Janet, to help her to dress herself in her wraps and furs. When she was dressed, she sent the maid out of the room, observing to my mother as she did so, that she never gave visitor's money to servants.

'Nor to anybody she can help,' said Jane.

'There, you mistake me,' said our aunt, turning round sharply on the unlucky Jane in an instant. 'I act from principle in not giving to servants, not from greed.'

'How ever did she hear me?' gasped Jane in a lower tone to me.

'As I hear other people,' said my aunt quietly.—'Good-bye, dear Mary' (and she turned to kiss my mother). 'You have been very kind to me. I never expected you to think me a beauty, you know; you gave me credit for being "kind-hearted and sensible"—I think that was it—and that is all I want from you. Believe me, I think all the better of you for having lived with you for three weeks in the palace of Truth.'

'Why, Janet! then you're not deaf after all?'

But what she answered, or what my mother said after that, I don't know, for we beat a hasty retreat from the room. We could not even bring ourselves to go down and say good-bye when we heard my father and Tom shouting last words at the carriage-door. I do not think we broke

silence for some minutes, till Nettie said: 'We have done it now! How she must hate us!'

'For what?' asked Tom, suddenly appearing; and then we told him all.

'You don't mean it!' and then he gave vent to his feelings in the longest of whistles.

What my father said on the subject, we never knew, nor, indeed, guessed, for his face was a sealed book, when he so pleased it, but no doubt his heart condemned him sufficiently.

'It was the meanest trick!' said Jane. 'Impossible to defend ourselves against such low cunning.'

'No, my dear, you might easily have been safe. I don't think it was quite fair of your aunt, though, and I shall write and tell her so.'

A few days brought Aunt Janet's letter. 'You must forgive me, Mary,' she said. 'I allow I was wrong—very wrong, if you will; but when you understand all, you will allow that my temptation was strong to see you all as you are. Some day I will tell you the story of my father's second wife, who happily died before him, and you will see that my dread of designing people is a natural one, after what I have suffered. Come up to town and see me, Mary, and let us talk it all over till you forgive me.'

'You have saved us, mother, I do believe,' said Tom. 'She likes you well enough to smile on us all for your sake.'

A letter came from Uncle Jacob next. 'Bring the girls with you when you come, Mary,' he said. 'Don't let them be vexed with their aunt for her whimsies—she has taken a fancy to your Nettie.'

'Nettie's naughtiness serves her as well as most people's goodness,' said Tom. 'Mother, look at your letter again, and see if there isn't an invitation for me.'

## NOMENCLATURE.

### IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

I COME now to take a few examples of the etymology of names of places. Our forefathers greatly excelled us in giving names to places. It would seem that they had carefully observed the features of the country, and that these, combined with some local tradition, were formed into names at once commemorative of the event and descriptive of the locality. Hills, being the most conspicuous objects in the landscape, would naturally form landmarks, and be the first to receive their designations. To them are applied the terms Ben, Pen, and Mont, pointing out the lofty mountains. These are frequently prefixed to an adjective signifying white or snowy, as Mont Blanc and Ben Nevis. Pen is confined to Wales and the north-west of England. Fell is of Scandinavian origin, and wherever it occurs, indicates that the region round had at one time suffered from the ravages of the Norsemen, those marauders of the sea, in their piratical incursions. Such are Scafell, Sneafell—that is, Snowy Mountain—and Goatfell. In the German and Swiss Alps, Horn—that is, peak—prevails, as Jungfrau-horn—that is, Young Woman's Peak. In Spain, and places colonised by that country, we find Sierra, signifying a saw, applied to mountain-ranges whose peaks appear disposed one after another like the teeth of that instrument. Between France and Spain are the Pyrenees; this word is

of the same origin as pyramid, and describes the peaks as assuming the pointed form of a flame of fire. In Scotland, for lower eminences, there are Dum, Dun, Down, Craig, Cairn, Croagh, Tor, Ban, Law, and Knock.

Mountains being the great depositories of mineral wealth, frequently take their names from the particular mineral found in them, as the Lead Hills in Dumfries; Côte d'Or, or Coast of Gold, in France; and the Andes, or Mountains of Copper, in South America.

Next to mountains, rivers form a fruitful source of national nomenclature. In most countries, there are several rivers of the same name, distinguished from each other by their position or the course of their current, as Upper and Lower, North, South, East, and West. Such are the numerous Avons both in England and Scotland, which word signifies water. Of like import are the Eska, Axe, Exe, and Usk, derived from the Celtic *Uisge*, meaning water. Ouse is a corruption of the plural form of the French *eau*—that is, water. The words Don, Doon, Duna, Dniuper, Dee, Deen, Dniester, Danube, all contain the root *don* or *dan*, meaning water or river. Such colours as black, white, red, blue, yellow, and green are frequently applied to streams, to mark some circumstance connected with them, as the colour of the water itself, the rocky channel through which they flow, or the complexion of the inhabitants of the river-basin. Such are the Niger (black), Bahr-el-Abiad (white), Bahr-el-Azrek (blue), and many others. Some are named from their volume of water, as the Guadalquivir, or Great River, which, though not a very large river, must have appeared so to the Moors, who named it, that people having come from the arid shores of Northern Africa, 'where no ample river rolls.'

The Indian word Mississippi signifies 'Father of Waters,' in veneration of that mighty stream by the Red Indians, who had paddled their canoes in its waters, built their wigwams on its banks, and hunted the elk and the buffalo on its wide-spread prairies, long before the murderous weapons of the Pale-faces drove the Red Man to the forests of the West, or their yet more fatal fire-water swept the race from the earth.

Rivers give their names to the basin which they drain, and the water-shed forms the boundary of the district; thus, Renfrew or Strathgryffe, Lanark or Clydesdale. Dumfries is divided into Eskdale, Annandale, and Nithsdale, from the three rivers which intersect that county. The Tweed, the Teviot, the Ettrick, the Spey, and the Dee are similarly applied. The defining and naming of districts in relation to rivers is universal; thus, the district of India between the Ganges and the Brahmaputra is called the Doab, or Two Rivers. That part of the same country drained by the five rivers which form the Indus, is known as the Punjab—that is, Five Rivers; and that region of Asia Minor known as the cradle of mankind, was anciently called Mesopotamia, from two Greek words meaning 'between the rivers'—namely, the Tigris and the Euphrates, which latter river has a singular poetic propriety of designation, 'causing gladness.'

Many countries are named from their inhabitants, and these are sometimes characteristic of their habits—such as Scotland and Germany. The former is not flattering to our national vanity, for it is said to signify a vagabond; hence Scotland would mean the land of vagabonds. But vagabond

had not originally its modern bad significance—it was simply a wanderer—a tendency which our southern neighbours assert is a prominent feature of the Scottish character at the present day. The central regions of Europe were inhabited by fierce and warlike tribes, who called themselves War-men, which name they appear to have borne when first brought into conflict with the Roman legions, carrying their eagles northward. There being no *W* in the Roman alphabet, *G* was substituted; hence the people were called Germans, and the land Germany. Similar traces of ancient tribes are found throughout the continent; thus, Gothland, Gothenburg, and Saxe-Gotha point to the Goths; Hungary to the Huns. By prefixing *V* to Andalusia, we are reminded of the ravages of the Vandals in the West. England derived its name from the Angles. The Norsemen gave the name of Normandy to a northern projection of France, while the western extremity, Bretagne, is so called from its having afforded a refuge to the Britons escaping from the Saxon usurpers. Space forbids me to mention others of similar derivation. I shall give one or two of a different kind from America. Canada was first taken possession of by Spanish adventurers. During their stay there, they treated the aborigines *suo more*—that is, with unmitigated cruelty. Their avarice being disappointed by the poverty of the country, they were continually complaining of its sterility; and the natives frequently hearing the Spaniards use the words *Aca nada* (It is barren), retained recollection of the expression after the departure of their tormentors. But not long after, the unfortunate natives were again dismayed by the appearance of other visitants, who happened to be French. Dreading a repetition of their former treatment, the poor people assembled on the beach, and, to dissuade the strangers from landing, kept shouting *Aca nada! Aca nada!* Their shibboleth proved unavailing, for the French took it for the name of the country; and after landing and taking possession, called the country Canada, under which name, but under a different government, instead of being naked and barren, it seems destined to become the granary of Britain.

Another company of Spaniards, landing at the southern extremity of the continent, on a cold and bleak shore, explored the unknown region for some distance without seeing any human beings, the only traces of whom were certain vestiges on the sand greatly resembling prints of human feet in shape and manner of tread, but much larger; hence they concluded that the inhabitants, if not altogether giants, had at least feet of gigantic size, wherefore they called the country Patagonia—that is, the land of the big-footed. Subsequent explorations discovered that the poor savages were larger neither in bodies nor feet than other men; but on account of the rigour of the climate, were obliged to wrap their feet with rope twisted from a kind of long coarse grass, and thus enlarged their pedal proportions.

More grateful to the taste of the indolent and luxurious Hidalgoes of Spain was another land they discovered, and which formed the last possession their nation held on the continent of America. It is a peninsula stretching southward from the mainland for about four hundred miles, being nowhere more than one hundred and twenty miles broad; though not far from the torrid zone, the heat is modified by the refreshing breath of the Atlantic

on the one side, and the sea-breeze from the Gulf of Mexico on the other. The soil is said to be a perfect counterpart of the climate, yielding rich crops in abundance, luxuriant in the most delicious fruits, and decked to profusion with gay-coloured flowers. No wonder that poor yet haughty Spain, yielding to the influence of the almighty dollar, with most reluctant grief sold to the government of the United States what she had delighted to call her Florida—the flowery land!

I shall end this part of my theme with the etymology of a few towns, confining myself chiefly to that of Scotland.

A worthy baillie, addressing the pupils of the burgh school, and referring to geography, called attention to the fact—‘for which,’ said he, ‘we can never be sufficiently grateful—that Providence always sends the large rivers to the big towns.’ Though the baillie somewhat confounded cause and effect, he had acuteness enough to perceive that towns and rivers are closely connected; hence many towns receive their names from their position on the river on whose banks they are built. Numerous towns situated at the mouth have the prefix *Aber* or *Inver*; the former belongs to the Cymric dialect of the Celtic, the latter to the Gaelic. Places where rivers might be crossed on foot were often chosen as sites for towns, and these have the termination *ford*. When a ford was impracticable, a ferry had to be established, which formed the nucleus of a town, as Queensferry, said to be named after Margaret, wife of the big-headed Malcolm Canmore. Towns have also been planted where rivers deepened into a pool or linn—hence Dublin, that is, Black Linn; or on an island formed by the river dividing its waters, as Enniskillen; or on low marshes formed by gravel and mud deposited by rivers when in flood, as Stockholm. This last is descriptive of the capital of Sweden, being built on a holm formed by the sediment of the waters issuing from Lake Maelar—the houses rest upon stakes or stocks driven deep into the soft soil; hence Stockholm.

Vocables signifying simply a town are very common in names of places. One of the commonest in both Scotland and Ireland is *Bal*, which some now believe to be connected with *polis*, Greek for a city. Another is *burg* or borough, the root of which is said to be a Gothic term signifying a circle, and secondarily applied to the collections of dwellings built in circular forts on the tops of hills. A very common form, to which I have already referred, is *Dum*, *Don*, *Dun*, or *Down*, signifying a rocky eminence, on which was erected a fort for the protection of the town built under it.

Places near churches often assumed the name of some saint or more than ordinary sanctity, and take the prefix *Kil*, signifying a cell or a burial-place. This prefix is very common in Scotland and Ireland, but rarely, if at all, met with in England. On the other hand, *Caster* or *Chester*, from the Latin, signifying a camp, is almost exclusively confined to England.

There remain to be mentioned the terminations *ton*, *toun*, or *town*, *ham* and *house*, all of which are of nearly equal import, and mean a dwelling. The *toun* did not signify a collection of houses arranged into streets, but more properly a farm-steading and its huts and outhouses.\* *Ham* is more connected

\* Burns, in praise of the pet sheep, Poor Mailie, says:  
Through a’ the toun she trotted by him.



with home than town. In this country, house is used in its simple form; but there are other forms, as Schaffhausen, near the falls of the Rhine, which means boat-house. Copenhagen means Merchants' Haven.

But I must now hurry over the remaining branch of my subject—namely, the etymology of names of persons. This is perhaps more interesting but less important than any other, because surnames, being now hereditary, are not at all descriptive of the persons who bear them, or if so, are so by mere accident; and what are called Christian names are generally given in remembrance of some near kinsman, the manufacture of a new name being a very rare occurrence. Formerly, the name given to a child was suggested either by an event, or commemorative of a circumstance concomitant with its birth, or expressed some feeling in the minds of the parents at the time. Occasions are not wanting in which this name was subsequently changed; indeed, there have been instances in which sponsors gave different names to the same child. The youngest son of Jacob was called by his mother Benoni—that is, son of my sorrow; but his father called his name Benjamin—that is, son of my right hand—a slight misnomer on the part of Jacob, for we read that 'all the men of Benjamin were left-handed.'

Surnames, or additional names, were not in use, in this country at least, more than six or seven hundred years ago. They were first applied to the chiefs of tribes, to distinguish them from others of the same rank, and these names gradually extended, not only to their children, but also to their retainers and followers; hence arose the circumstance, that all living in the same community bore the same surname, which fact was observable in the clan-names of the Highlands of Scotland to a more recent date, perhaps, than anywhere else. But the same thing was quite discernible not very long ago in all remote places throughout the country. In rural districts, out of the line of any great thoroughfare, there were often not more than two or three surnames, and these were common to and included the whole of the old residents of the place. Those bearing different cognomens were styled 'incomers,' and in all matters of local legislation, they were always 'left out in the cold.' Sir Walter Scott relates a story of a border village of this kind, through which a beggar had assiduously plied his vocation all day with very indifferent success. Rendered crabbedly clamorous by the state of his wallet, which might have had the mark M.T. inscribed, he querulously inquired of a guidwife from whom he had just received a rebuff: 'Are there nae Christians ava in this place?' 'Na, na,' returned she; 'we're a' Johnstones and Jardines here.' I have good reason to know a village where, not so very long ago, so many of the inhabitants were either Barrs or Barbour, as to give occasion for the mischievous joke, that the place was *barbarous*, and the people *barbarians*.

Surnames were very often derived from the place possessed by an individual, or where he came from; thus, Robert Bruce was known as Robert de Brns, the name of a castle in Normandy, the original seat of the family of the patriot king. All surnames having the French preposition *de* (often but erroneously pronounced 'the') are of similar origin. Those with the article *le* or *l'* denote some quality, and are properly rendered into 'the' in English. The name of Britain itself,

and its three divisions, England, Scotland, and Ireland, are sometimes found used as surnames; nor are the kingdom of Fife and the independency of Man unrepresented in this respect. Fourteen at least of the counties of Scotland have been chosen as surnames; while the names of cities, towns, and parishes so used are innumerable.

A very numerous class of surnames is derived from rank or station, at the head of which may be placed King; then the royal name of Stewart, the founder of which, and of the Stewart dynasty, was Walter, High Steward of Scotland. Under the same royal rank, I think that Shaw and Roy have a claim to be placed. Shaw is said to be of eastern origin. Among the Semitic tribes, Shah denotes the rank of prince or king, and is thought to have been imported thence by the gipsies in the corrupted form of Faa, the regal surname of these nomads. It is not certain whether Roy is of French or Gaelic origin; if the former, its claim to royalty is clearly made out by merely substituting *i* for *y*—no great difficulty in heraldry. If Gaelic, the claim is established by inference, Roy meaning red, the colour exclusively worn by monarchs. Next in order of rank are Duke, Lord, and Knight. The offices of Judge and Dempster (from *deem* or *doom*) sometimes do duty as surnames. Another numerous class is derived from trades or occupations, at the head of which may be placed the cosmopolite Smith. This name is an out-and-out democrat, which, however disguised by the substitution of *y* for *i*, or the addition of final *e*, sturdily asserts its plebeian origin, and declines to be ennobled. Most of the common colours have been laid under contribution to furnish surnames, probably suggested by the complexion of the face or colour of the hair; as Black, White, Brown, Gray, Green, and Blue, which last were, it is to be hoped, descriptive of the eyes, and not of the skin or hair.

As man at first gave names to the beasts, so not only the beasts of the field, but also the fowls of the air and the fishes of the sea have given names to man, such as Lyon, Wolf, Lamb, Hogg, which does not mean a pig, but a sheep a year old. From birds we have Hawk, Swan, Drake, &c.; and from fish, Salmon and Haddock. Other names denote qualities, as Blythe, Bold, Swift, Stark, Wiseman, &c. But the most numerous of all are patronymics—that is, names derived from the father. These occur in Irish form with the prefix *O'*, in Gaelic with *Mac*, in Welsh with *Ap*, in Norman French with *Fitz*, and in common English with the termination *son*. There is scarcely a Christian name in ordinary use from which surnames of this sort have not been derived. The common name Sinclair is a contraction, an unfortunate one, I think, of Saint Clare. There is also an unhappy abbreviation of Seven Oaks, first into Snokes, and thence into the Cockney form of Snooks, which should serve as a caution to people not to trifle with the pronunciation of their names. It is no doubt a privilege and an advantage too to be the possessor of a well-sounding name, or one associated with deeds of renown in days bygone; but being only accidental, it is not a matter for boasting. Much nobler than the bearer of the proudest name in the peerage, is he who

Lives to build, not boast, a generous race,  
No tenth transmitter of a foolish face.

Of Christian names, Agnes signifies gentle;



Amelia, lovely; Flora, a flower; Euphemia, well spoken of; Isabella, fair; Margaret, a pearl; Mary, Martha, and Marion, I am sorry to say, are all *bitter*. Andrew means manly; Alexander, a helper of men; John, divine favour; Peter and Patrick, a rock; and Robert, bright fame. This last has always been a favourite name in Scotland, from the time when the nation willed that on the death of Robert II. the name of his eldest son John should be changed to Robert before they would acknowledge him as their sovereign, to the time when Burns says that among the first things that happened to himself on his advent to this world—

The gossip keekit in his loof;  
Quo' she: 'Wha lives will see the proof,  
This waly boy 'ill be nae cuif;  
I think we 'll ca' him Robin.'

The list of names given to children is not very numerous, but it is sometimes increased by capricious crotchets in the brains of parents, some of which occasionally assume rather a comic character, as in the case of a letterpress printer, who had all his children named according to the terms employed in the process of book-making. Under the impression that on a certain occasion his wife had made the last addition to his family, he gave it the name of *FINIS*. Subsequent circumstances, however, compelled him to add to the family register the names of Appendix, Supplement, and Addendum. I am disposed to regard the story as apocryphal, because there is no indication of any maternal remonstrances by which such insult to the mother and injury to the child would probably have been successfully repelled—a prompt instance of which was lately related to me by the registrar of a neighbouring parish. A decent farmer's wife, after having her child baptised in church, waited in the vestry till service was over to have the registrar's certificate endorsed in the usual manner. The minister, not being quite sure of the date, said, in an interrogative tone: 'This is the twentieth, I think?' The worthy matron, understanding the query to refer to the number of her family, indignantly retorted: 'I think, sir, ye're very *impudent*, for it's only the thirteenth—the wee lamb!'

In conclusion, allow me to insist on two lessons easily drawn from the subject I have been endeavouring to illustrate. First, it behoves parents to regard it as an imperative duty to choose proper names for their children. This is a rule the careful observance of which is no more than just, and 'any want of conformity unto, or transgression of' it not less than cruel. One could hardly imagine that parents could fail in this duty were they to consider that what they then bestow, perhaps on the suggestion of a crazy whim, must be borne, very likely in an aggravated form, by their children as long as they are in the world, and in the case of a foolish selection, may be the cause of much irritation to them, not only as children, but as men and women, all their lives. Every one knows that it is not one or two isolated events, but an aggregate of small things, that make up the sum of human happiness or misery; and an incongruous connection of names may be made the handle for inflicting much annoyance on their unhappy bearer.

There is another custom of selecting names from Scripture, especially the Old Testament, which I think had better be abandoned. There can be no

doubt but that frequent and familiar use of anything has a tendency to lower the respect with which we may have formerly regarded it; and I would have the names of the patriarchs and prophets of old held sacred from everyday touch and vulgar association. No man of correct taste or elevated sentiment can, without a shudder of regret, hear the grand old names of Abraham and Isaac, Moses, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel desecrated into Abe and Ike, Jerry and Zike, and applied to a group of ragged urchins grovelling in a gutter.

Few of us can hope to leave broad acres of land or large legacies of money to our children, but there is a legacy declared by infallible testimony to be 'better than riches'—one of incalculable value in a moral view, and far from insignificant in a literal sense, which it is in the power of the humblest and the poorest to bequeath—the inheritance of a good name.

## THE CLYFFARDS OF CLYFFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'LOST SIR MASSINGBERD,' &c.

### CHAPTER XLIV.—CATOR'S RECOMPENSE.

'My story is not short,' began the serving-man; 'and lest this posture, with my fingers twisted in your neck, should weary you, my master, you shall lie down—so. Now with my foot upon your chest, so as to feel you safe, and ready to squeeze your life out, like a worm's, should you shew sign of movement, you shall hear me out.—Two-score of years ago, and more than that, my mother—Heaven rest her soul!—was coming across this hill that lies above us with a great burden. We had been wealthy once—or what seemed so to yeomen-folk like us—but we had gradually grown poor. The house had lost its natural head, and though our mother did all she could, and more than her strength warranted, to keep want from us, it was coming with sure foot. She was returning from market, and having sold what she took, was bringing back some household matters of which we stood in need. A good mother, and a brave one, and if there be anything of goodness or courage left in me, this villain's servant for these ten years past, I owe it to her.'

As the man said these words, he doffed his cap, and over his rugged face a look of loving reverence crept, like sunshine on a weatherbeaten wall.

'It was spring-time then as now; not such a spring as comes to Sandby, mistress; but what we northern folk are used to: rain, and sleet, and cold, and on the mountains mist a'most as dark as night, and more misleading. Our mother lost her way, and wandering from what little track there was, plunged into what we call a turbary, or morass; not dangerous to strong and active persons in the daytime, but to her, fatigued and overburdened, nor knowing where to turn, most perilous. There, almost exhausted with vain efforts to escape, Ralph Clyffard, now among the saints in heaven, found her. The late Master, in his youth, was ever roaming over the Fells alone, although no sportsman, and he knew them as well as any shepherd. Not only did he rescue my poor mother, but finding her half dead, bore her in his own strong arms to our very cottage-door. When we had heard from her own lips what the young Master of Clyffe had done for her and us—and never shall I forget the loving care with which he brought her in, and bade us tend her well, for that he knew himself

what it was to lose a mother—she called both me and Lucy to her bedside, and bade us swear, so long as her memory should be fresh and dear to us (as it is to this day, God knows), to serve the Clyffards, mad or sane, to the utmost of our power. We did not need the oath to make us theirs; but they were rich, and in no want, at that time, of such help as we could give them. Years rolled on, and I dare say the squire forgot his good deed as well as those whom it had so benefited; but we did not forget, although we had laid our mother in her grave. But a time came, when out of the curse of the Clyffards fell an evil upon them even worse than it—the Carrs.

‘I beg your pardon, Mrs Raymond, and not for this alone. I know that I have seemed discourteous and unmanly to you many times: of late, as you shall hear, I have been so for your own sake, and the sake of that dear little one, whose grandsire saved my mother’s life; but when I saw you first, the niece of that fiendish woman, of the ruffian Gideon, and of this reptile whom I have here beneath my foot, I gave you neither reverence nor respect; an evil seed, I thought, could but bring forth evil fruit. You do not know, nor will I vex you by a recital of them, how hateful were the deeds of your kith and kin. I had heard of them, though dimly, though what I heard fell far short of the hideous truth; and when Squire Cyril was taken to the Dene, I volunteered to accompany him as his body-servant. There I did what I could for him, poor fellow, and for the rest of the wretched creatures in that loathsome place; but to all seeming I was as bad, or worse, as its master Gideon, or as this—Ah! you begin to wriggle, my friend, do you? I thought this would be bitter news.

‘Yes, I played the fiend to please the Devil; and I did please him; won the confidence of both these villain brothers, and even of their wily sister Grace. Yes, Mr Clement, Miss Grace was as doubtless a clever woman, but my deep hate overcame her cunning. I need not tell you how you starved and tortured Cyril, and how at last Gideon slew him, in self-defence, as you would wish to say, if I would let you speak; but Cyril would never have attacked him but that he was driven to it (as any man, sane or mad, would have been) by his brutal treatment. Before that time, I had been an unwilling witness to the wiles of Grace, and saw her capture in her toils the good kind Master in his old age and gloom. This I could not prevent, nor even attempt to do so, without risk of a discovery which would destroy my usefulness; and I perceived that I should be wanted yet to shield poor Mr Rupert, whom never shall the Dene receive within its cursed walls, although your sister counts upon it with such sureness. I could not then foresee that I was also fated to be, thank Heaven! the guardian of Raymond’s wife, and of his child—the last of all the Clyffards. But when Grace became mistress of Clyffe, her ambition increased with her new station, and all that thwarted it she was resolved to sweep away. I need not say what an unexpected obstacle occurred in your own marriage with Mr Raymond. Her fury, when she found her niece had fled with him she hated most of all the Clyffards, was something worth beholding; and when I saw it, then for the first time I began to like you, mistress, as I never thought to like a Carr. Then I resolved to shield you also—being Raymond’s wife and Grace’s foe—from every peril

which I could avert. When, after finding out where you had hid yourselves, your husband’s death was plotted by his stepmother and her two brothers—of whom this wretch alone survives to pay the forfeit—I was privy to their plans. It was I who accompanied Gideon Carr, under his assumed name of Stevens, to Westportown as his servant, and strove to put you on your guard—in vain. I was and am that Well-wisher from whom you heard so often without ever guessing, up to this last hour, who that friend might be. I was not indeed in time to save your husband’s life—the bridegroom of two years—the father of your helpless child—your only friend on earth’—

Here Clement made some movement on the sand.

‘What, villain! doth that please thee? Darest thou to triumph thus, that art so near to the very gates of hell! Before thou goest there, I have a message for thee for thy brother’s ear—*Raymond Clyffard is not dead!*’

An inarticulate cry like that of a wild beast in pain broke from the lips of the prostrate man. ‘It is false!’ cried he. ‘He fell fifty fathoms sheer upon the sea-beach, and tosses now beneath the depths of ocean.’

‘Thou liest! Silence, devil! He did not fall. He is alive, and at Clyffe. This very hour he stands face to face with thy vile sister, and she too is under foot. But we all thought him dead, as thou dost; and I took the child away, and brought her hither, to keep under my eye and Lucy’s, lest he should slay her too. But that God’s vengeance overtook him in the very act, he would have drowned her, and the mother likewise, even as I will now drown thee. Answer me not, or I will beat thy teeth in with my heel. The pent-up rage of half a score of years longs to be loose. There, let that quiet thee!’

‘Spare him, for God’s sake, spare him!’ cried Mildred passionately, as Cator’s iron-bound boot crashed in the wretch’s mouth, and ground him in the sand.

‘Yes, mistress, I will spare him—but only for the Devil’s sake, who is going to have his company—for five minutes longer. Where were we, Mr Clement, when you were so indiscreet as to interrupt? Ah! I remember. I brought the child to Clyffe, as being the safest place, since I was there; and when Grace sent for you, I likewise wrote to bid you come, for I knew that I could manage her and Clement single-handed. Night and day, I have watched over you and your little one ever since you set foot in Clyffe. When you came thither, I thought that I alone was left to guard you; but on the second day, I recognised your husband in his artist’s dress.—Yes, Clement, the man Grace spoke of so carelessly a few hours back is her deadly foe, and by this time she feels it. I was close by when Rufus knew his master, and thereby told me who he was.—My gun was in my hand that morning, mistress, you remember; that was to slay the beast, if it had chanced to mislike you. When you had left this cave, I entered it, and made myself known to your husband, but bade him keep my secret, even from you. That was cruel, I know, but it was necessary. If once you felt that you were safe and among friends, your manner might have altered, and the crafty Grace have suspected something amiss. The cloak of guile I have worn these many years has become so natural, that you could never guess me aught but the knave I looked; but Lucy—it was

hard for her, whose heart is kind and true, to pretend hardness, when it yearned towards the babe and you. In case you did not get poor Mr Rupert to sign the paper, Grace might have struck some sudden blow in wrath, such as I could not ward; therefore, I brought about your interview with him a day earlier than the time appointed. The signing of that deed with its forged date has brought this woman within our power, to punish or to banish from Clyffe for ever."

"I will witness against her," interrupted Clement eagerly, though with speech half-choked with sand and broken teeth. "She was always a self-seeker—Grace. I will do my duty, I will indeed, good Cator, though she is my sister."

The serving-man withdrew his foot in haste, as though the very contact of his heel with such a loathsome wretch had been pollution; and Mr Carr, feeling his lungs once more in play, continued to improve the occasion.

"My testimony will be really most important, if you will only let me give it. I have known Sister Grace so long. She has never behaved to me as a sister should, I'm sure; nor would she ever listen to my advice. "These plots of yours," I have said again and again—you will do me justice, Cator—"are bad, and very discreditable."

"No, master—"are fraught with too much danger." That was the line you always took. Do you think to deceive me, of all men? No. Those who know you not may, indeed, perhaps credit your damned hypocrisy; but they shall never have the chance. Out of the talons of the law, you, reptile-like, might haply manage to wriggle, but out of my clutch thou shalt never creep. If there is good enough in thine evil heart out of which to frame one prayer, though, methinks, I might weave rope out of this sand as easily, make it, frame it. I would I could say: "God forgive thee!" but I cannot."

"Will God forgive thee, Cator, who thus takest the law into thy violent hands?" said Mildred solemnly.

"I will take my risk of that, mistress. I have seen too much of wrong and woe worked in this world, to trust to law for righting it. Leave me to deal with this fellow; it is not a scene for woman's eyes.—Art thou ready, wretch? It is thy time for drowning, Carr."

With a great effort, Clement Carr managed to seize Mildred's garment by the hem, and to that clung, in spite of Cator's efforts to unloose his hold.

"Then must I use my other hand," quoth the serving-man grimly, "for drown thou shalt."

"O Mildred, good niece Mildred, my own sister's child, will you see me slain before your eyes?"

"Cator," cried Mildred passionately, "forbear, forbear! For my sake, for whom you have done so much, I pray you spare him."

"I can not, mistress. I dare not let slip this precious time, for which I have been longing through years of basest servitude, as Jacob longed for Rachel. This is my sole reward."

"He has been paid, niece Mildred," gasped the wretched Clement—"paid well and punctually—while during these late months"—

"Yes, I have been paid," broke in the other fiercely, "but every guinea, every shilling of it lies unspent, untouched, as though it were that price of blood you dreamed it was. They bribed me

with their gold to aid the murderer Gideon against thy own husband, mistress. Will you say spare him now?"

"Yes, yes," cried Mildred earnestly, "and for my husband's sake—for his child's sake, whose innocent name will else be smirched for ever by this direful deed! The records of her House are stained enough already with blood and violence. I charge you, for her sake, the last of that ill-starred race to which you owe such loving fealty, to spare this wretched man."

"Mistress," rejoined Cator sternly, and still keeping his gripe of Clement's throat, "ere I entered this place to-day, with yon base villain, bent upon sweeping your two innocent lives from his foul path, as he had already swept your husband's, I resolved within myself that never again should his vile body come between the sunlight and the earth, nor wind of heaven be polluted by touching it. No fitter grave, thought I, can it surely find than that black stream, fleeting, no man knows whither, into the darksome hollows of the earth."

"Save me, niece Mildred—save me!" broke in the shrinking wretch. "I am your own mother's brother!"

"Moreover," continued Cator, "I made oath this morning, while this oily slave was compassing your deaths, that never more should Raymond Clyffard's eyes rest on the would-be murderer of his child and wife. I swore it before Heaven."

"They never shall rest on me," pleaded Clement passionately; "I will leave Clyffe, England, Europe, instantly. They never shall rest on me, upon my sacred soul."

"Upon your *what*?"

"Then, look you, Cator," continued the abject wretch, "if you don't believe my solemn—nay, pray have patience with me—If Raymond ever look upon me more, I give you leave to slay me on the spot, to stab me, shoot me, cut me off by swiftest poison."

"Thou giv'st me *leave*?—and *poison*? I tell thee, Clement Carr, if I do not drown thee now, and ever again I even so much as *hear* of thee, then straightway will I seek thee out, with Rufus, and the hound shall tear and eat thy living limbs. Or if I come upon thee suddenly, alone or in the tumult of the streets, I care not how or where it is, that instant will I clutch thee by the throat, and it shall be thy last. Off! No words; let me not hear thy whining voice again. Off to yon corner of the cave, and hug thy life, spared at the prayer of her thou wouldst have slain. If mine eye light on thee again, if mine ear hear thee, it were better for thee to have been drowned in Ribble."

Upon his knees, half dead with pain and fear, Clement Carr dragged himself away, like a scotched snake, out of the range of the torch-light.

"Mistress," continued Cator in changed and quiet tones, "you have robbed me of half the recompense for which I have toiled these ten years. Let us now to Clyffe, where I trust the other half at least awaits me."

#### CHAPTER XLV.—THE LAST OBSTACLE REMOVED.

Chill night had fallen upon Clyffe Hall, and with it for once Repose. The Master did not take his untimely sport, and hound and hunter stood with pricking ears, that listened for the horn in vain, in kennel and stall. A sudden change, Grace had caused it to be said, had come over his



wild and wayward brain; and evidently a change for the better. Still there was danger in it. The lull might grow to long and settled calm, or it might end in storm. Let all about him be kept quiet. The household must retire to rest, as though the hours of darkness were its accustomed season; let no lights be shewn. Mrs Clyffard herself had set the example by retiring early, and in her own bedchamber the lamp was quenched. She had neither sent for Clement nor Cator to inquire how their mission had ended, and had studiously avoided that portion of the house which Mildred and her child were wont to occupy. She felt no sting of conscience for the deed which she had ordered to be done that afternoon, but it haunted her brain uneasily. Her purpose was as firm as ever, but not her mind. She had been wont to look as calmly on her Past with all its blots, as on the Future with its stubborn obstacles, and the means which it was necessary to use (for so she reasoned, apologetic in spite of herself) to overcome them. But now she shrank from retrospection, and indeed from thought of all kind that was not relevant to the act before her. The Wicked, who have wickedness upon hand, are so far fortunate; it is when they have gained all they have so foully aimed at that their worst punishment begins. Grace Clyffard, notwithstanding that she had steeped her soul in guilt, had as yet gained nothing. While Rupert lived, and was at large, she had laboured in vain. Her heart was weary of deceit and crime. She longed, almost as the Penitent, for peace, for the hour when there should be no further need for lies, demanding such continuous care in act and speech, and for violent deeds, from which anxious risk was so inseparable.

'But one more crime,' thought she—as though one launched upon a *glissade* in the Alps, and bound for a *crevasse*, should say: But one more slide—and then my path is plain and level to the end. While this hare-brained fellow dwells here, I can never feel the mistress of Clyffe Hall. Why should I wait until his madness is full-blown? What sanity he has but shews itself in aly suspicion, which itself is dangerous to me, or else in open hate! It was strange that she should thus excuse herself for what she was about to do, since she had done such far worse deeds than that which she now contemplated upon the road to her yet unreachd goal; but such was the case. Perhaps it was that Rupert had been his father's favourite son: and certainly the nearest approach to remorse which she had ever experienced had touched her with respect to her treatment of Ralph Clyffard, the man that had so deeply loved her, if after a somewhat doting fashion. In her scheme against Raymond, she had strengthened the triple brass about her heart by calling to mind his disobedience to the old man's wishes, as she chose to consider that half-promise she had extorted from him about Rupert's marriage. Raymond had robbed his brother of the bride which his father, as well as Grace herself, had destined for him; Raymond, too, had so little reverence for the things the old man had held sacred, that it would have vexed him to have seen him rule at Clyffe. But Rupert, by no jesuitry of even her subtle brain could she justify her present purpose against him; nay, there was something peculiarly abhorrent in it, inasmuch as it had for its object the very catastrophe the fear of which had embittered Ralph's whole life. In order to

overthrow his son's already shaken intellect, she was about to employ the self-same cruel weapon by which she had done to death, although inadvertently, his father.

She knew that none but Raymond, and probably Mildred, had been aware of her having played the part of the Fair Lady of Clyffe. Rupert himself most certainly had no suspicion of it; and although he had of late become such a dare-devil in some respects, he still, she knew, retained his superstitions. It was not uncommon with him, when he did not hunt, to pass many hours of the night upon the roof of Clyffe Hall, in order, as he had told her with bated breath, to consult his father's spirit, which roamed about the spot where he had died, on matters of importance. That very day, he had announced his intention of so doing, and ever since nightfall, Grace had been waiting for him there, attired in her old disguise. Crouching in an angle of the central tower, in her dark and shapeless dress, with her long hair streaming about her shoulders, and in her hand a shroud, or what appeared to be so, she looked indeed, in the sickly light of that crescent moon, a spectre fit to imperil the reason of the bravest and most sane. Tarrying so long alone, in the very spot where Ralph had perished at her hands, as much as though she had driven a dagger through his heart, had tried even her nerves, and her face was worn and haggard with that fearful watch. The night-wind, too, from off the wastes of Ribble Fell, blew full upon her, and chilled her blood, not only with its cold, but with many a strange and stealthy sound; putting shrill voices into the gargoyles' mouths, that seemed to mock her, even when dumb; using the water-pipes as speaking-trumpets through which to tell the household where the mistress was; and hurrying the blanched and withered leaves of autumn along the leaden roof, like some great company of ghosts without a burial-place in mother-earth, who run to meet grim Charon at his every ferry, only to be denied the wished-for passage.

At last she hears a door opened and then shut, and in the haste and violence of the action, recognises Rupert's hand. He can now do nothing slowly or with care. To think, to speak, except by impatient unconnected snatches, has long been difficult for him, but of late his very actions have become hurried. For a moment he stands irresolute, and throws a hasty glance in the direction of the skylight, by which his stepmother stands hid; then falls to pacing rapidly to and fro along the eastward leads. These are fringed by a low parapet of stone, beside which, ever and anon, he pauses, and looks down upon the rose-garden, which lies, although at a great depth, just underneath. Upon either side of it spreads the stately terrace, and below, the sloping lawn, ringed by the moat, here shining like ebony in the moonbeams, there lustreless as a pall beneath the overshadowing bank. Beyond, the wooded park, with many a hollow and knoll, blends southward with the rich and teeming lowlands, and on the north, creeps half-way up the base of the barren Fell. But, for Rupert Clyffard's eyes, though bright and even piercing, nature has neither charm nor awe; and yet there is speculation in them too. He is never tired of counting on his fingers One, Two, Three, and Four, and at the fourth he seems to measure the distance from where he stands to the rose-garden below. 'There I beheld her first,' he says; 'down yon stone stairs, which ever



since have seemed like altar-steps. Grace led her by the hand towards me, as the briar brings forth the rose. There was our trysting-place, and there—yes, there—beneath the roses, will I lie, when all is over. After life's fitful fever, men sleep well, 'tis said—I hope so, for I have need of a long rest—and where so well as in the spot hallowed by their most sacred recollections. What is the chapel to me, or I to the chapel? Let Guy and Bertram, Roderick and Cyril, sniff the odour of sanctity—they like it; it smells in *my* nose like dead men's bones. Give *me* the odour of rose-leaves'—

'Rupert Clyffard!'

The young man turned, and beheld the boding phantom of his House standing close beside him. With a cry of terror, he threw up his arms, stepped swiftly backwards, and in an instant had toppled over the low parapet; but even as he fell, that Instinct which, unlike our fair-weather friend Reason, remains with us till death, made him catch at the stone coping, where with both hands he hung. Grace slowly thrust her cold white face above the balustrade, and then withdrew it hastily, terrified to see him so near, striving with feet and fingers, whom she had thought by that time to be lying far below, and past all strife; yet not so hastily but that his upturned gaze met hers, and recognised her wicked eyes.

'One, one,' cried he, and with a frantic effort, such as a sane man could scarcely have put forth, drew himself upward to the parapet itself, and clutched it with nervous gripe. Upon his holding fast the issue of another life than his depended. If once he reached the top, not all the subtlety of Grace's brain could have prolonged her life five minutes. She knew it well; she read it in the hungry looks which, even in that mortal peril, craved for vengeance rather than for safety; she heard it in the deadly menace of his 'One, one, one,' reiterated with frightful hate and vehemence, and yet as though it were her knell of doom. Grace had never meant to take his life, but only to rob him of what little store of reason yet remained to him. His falling backwards was an unforeseen mischance; but now that it was a question of his life or hers, she was not one to hesitate. She threw herself at once upon his clutching fingers, and with the force and fury of a wild-cat, strove to unloose their hold.

'Fiend, liar, whom now I know, but you shall pay for this!' shrieked Rupert, breathless with rage, at least as much as with his ceaseless struggles. 'I will spoil the face of this Fair Lady as sure as I wear nails.'

'Not so,' hissed Grace, as one by one she tore his bleeding fingers from their hold.

'What! you are stronger than I?' laughed Rupert harshly; 'then I go to the rosebed a day sooner, that is all.' Yet, with a madman's cunning, even while he spoke, he exchanged his clutch of the stone for her own flesh. 'You see I have your hand now, Mrs Grace. Since we are about to part, you must let me kiss it.'

But with a cry of terror lest he should bite it through, Grace snatched it from his now feeble grasp, and he fell swift and sheer upon the gravel-walk which he had so often paced that very day, and lay there motionless.

'He sought his doom,' murmured Grace huskily, as she once more peered over the balustrade. 'He drew his death upon himself, and perhaps it is

better so. How strange that he should have met the self-same fate as'—

Here she stopped, and turned, and listened, with her hand upon her heart, to still its rapid throbbings. Up the private stairs close by, which led from her late husband's room to the roof-top, there was a hurrying step, whose every footfall struck her with unimaginable terror. Grace knew the step of a foe as another woman recognises that of her lover. It was a swift and vigorous stride, such as she well knew had belonged but to one man in Clyffe Hall—and he was Dead!

## OUR NEW PARLIAMENT.

THE million or million-and-a-half possessors of the suffrage have exercised their privilege. Their prescribed task is executed, and they may now rest and be thankful that the hurly-burly of electioneering is over for one while. Party politicians have long since summed up their gains and losses, triumphing in the one, and explaining away the other; but whether the nation at large has lost or gained by the changes wrought at the polling-booths, is a question time alone can answer. One thing is certain, a new House of Commons has been shaped out of the antagonistic atoms submitted to the tender mercies of the electors, and it may be worth while to examine the result, and see of what stuff the seventh parliament of Victoria is made.

Those who fear lest the democratic tendencies of the time may extinguish the Englishman's proverbial liking for lords, may find some consolation in the fact, that the aristocracy of the land is by no means unrepresented in the new parliament, since the electors have chosen to send into the Lower House the heirs of the dukedoms of Buccleuch and Devonshire; the marquises of Abercorn, Clanricarde, Exeter, Headfort, Salisbury, Waterford, and Westminster; the earldoms of Amberst, Chichester, Chesterfield, Devon, Derby, Fitzwilliam, Granville, Howe, Hardwicke, Kenmare, Lucan, Lonsdale, Mayo, Suffolk, Strafford, and Zetland; and the baronies of Ashburton, Aveland, Feversham, Cremorne, Carington, Ebury, Egerton of Tatton, Forester, Leonfield, Portman, Tredegar, Vivian, and Walsingham. To these future wearers of coronets must be added—to complete the aristocratic element—four Irish peers, sixty-seven younger sons and brothers of noblemen, and some sixteen gentlemen claiming relationship more or less remote (to say nothing of those connected by marriage ties), besides a strong body of sixty-seven baronets. Among the titled members, we may include eight knights, a couple of German barons, and one baron of the kingdom of Portugal.

The army is very fairly represented in the new House by two lieutenant-generals, two major-generals, four colonels, thirteen lieutenant-colonels, three majors, fourteen captains, three lieutenants, and three cornets; and these gallant forty-four have a reserve force in the shape of sixty-one retired officers, to help them in looking after the interests of our defenders. Thirty-five militia officers and fifty-one holders of commissions in the yeomanry cavalry may suffice to protect those branches of the service; while the Volunteers, should they need parliamentary assistance, have a couple of colonels, ten lieutenant-colonels, two majors, eight captains, and we know not how

many full privates, to speak in their behalf. After this, the navy makes but a poor show—three admirals, one captain, three lieutenants, and four retired officers being the extent of its strength on the legislative roll.

A parliament containing a hundred lawyers would be a fearful thing for the contemplation of a well-regulated mind, but such, on the face of the returns, does our present one appear to be. Luckily, the majority of those called to the bar are only lawyers by courtesy, and not by actual profession. Still, the gentlemen learned in the law are quite numerous enough. Twenty-five legislators write Q.C. after their names, and they are as equally divided between the two great political parties as they possibly can be. On the one side of the House will sit Palmer, Collier, James, Coleridge, Headlam, Roebuck, Miller, O'Loughlin, Morris, Lawson, Ingham, Dundas, and Sullivan; while Her Majesty's Opposition has the benefit of the legal attainments of Cairns, Walpole, Bovill, Rolt, Whiteside, Huddleston, Selwyn, Forsyth, Bagdallay, Gurney, Kelly, and George. Then we find four sergeants-at-law, and at least eighteen practising barristers and five solicitors; while among the legal officials who have found their way into the House, are the recorders of London, Brighton, Portsmouth, Rye and Hastings, Bristol and Berwick.

Doctors have always been at a discount in the political world, nevertheless the county of Leitrim and the borough of Shrewsbury have this time chosen surgeons as their representatives. The press supplies three members in the proprietors of the *Leed's Mercury*, the *Freeman's Journal*, and the *Cork Examiner*. Of names known to literature we have a select few in Bulwer, Disraeli, Kinglake, Mill, Hughes, Layard, Torrens, Stirling, Lamont, and Forsyth. Of this little band, the metropolis claims four, having apparently determined for once in a way to pay a little homage to intellect. Art is represented by a solitary architect; and the important profession of civil-engineering has succeeded in obtaining four seats in the new parliament.

Among the members of the legislature we find seven directors of the Bank of England, and the same number of private bankers; four magnates of the monetary world; eight iron-masters, four contractors, eighteen manufacturers, forty-nine merchants, five brewers, one ship-builder, one stock-broker, one publisher, one house-agent, and one tenant-farmer. This analysis of the commercial element of parliament, however, must be taken only as an approximation to the truth, for we suspect many more members are connected with trade and commerce in some way or other.

How our governors and law-makers are educated, is a matter of some interest. Those who believe in the great public schools being the natural nurseries of statesmanship, will be gratified to learn that they hold their own in parliament yet. Eton stands foremost, claiming no fewer than one hundred and thirty-five of the representatives of the nation, and among that hundred and thirty-five are found the familiar names of Gladstone, Wood, Cranbourne, Elcho, Griffith, Northcote, and Packington. Harrow comes next with sixty-three, but it lost its most famous son when death struck down the young-hearted veteran in whom England delighted. Twenty-eight Rugebeians have been returned, among them Sir Roundell Palmer, Lord Stanley, General Peel, Mr Horsman, and Mr Goschen. Westminster contri-

butes twenty-one, and Winchester eighteen members, the Admiralty Secretary hailing from the former school, and the leader of the Opposition from the latter. There are only nine Carthusians besides the President of the Board of Trade, and Shrewsbury can only boast half that number of scholars, but of them, two are of some note—one being Judge Advocate-general, and the other having ousted Mr Gladstone from his university seat.

Oxford is far ahead of her rival in the Lower House, the Oxonians numbering one hundred and fifty-three against one hundred and fourteen. Of this goodly array, Christ Church College claims ninety members; Oriel, twenty; Balliol, twenty; University, five; Brasenose, four; Magdalen, four; Exeter, two; and Merton, Lincoln, St John's, Trinity, and Worcester Colleges, one each. Trinity leads the colleges of Cambridge with ninety-two; St John's coming next with twelve; Christ's, Trinity Hall, and Magdalen following with two each; and Caius, Clare, Queen's, and Emmanuel bringing up the rear with one member apiece. Trinity College, Dublin, has no cause to be ashamed of its contribution of thirty. Edinburgh University has seven representatives; the London University, three; University College, three; Aberdeen University, one; St Andrews, one; Manchester New College, one; the Royal College of the Mauritius, one; Sandhurst, seven; Woolwich, two; Portsmouth Naval College, one; Haileybury, three; while two members obtained their education at the university of Gottingen, celebrated in Canning's rhymes. Ninety-seven of the collegians above enumerated took the degree of M.A.; five are entitled to the distinctive letters LL.D., and twice as many to those of D.C.L. Among them are two Chancellor's medallists, and the Oxford and Cambridge Professors of Political Economy.

Ladies may decry club-life, but our legislators have a strong appreciation of the advantages of those institutions. One hundred and sixty members of parliament are free of the Carlton; one hundred and thirty-one may take their ease at the Reform. The other clubs are represented in the following proportions: Brook's, seventy-nine; Traveller's, sixty-two; Athenaeum, fifty-one; Oxford and Cambridge, forty; White's, thirty; Boodle's, twenty-three; Guards', twenty-one; Conservative, twenty; University, nineteen; Union, eighteen; Army and Navy, sixteen; United Service, sixteen; Garrick, six; and Windham, five.

Mr Thorold (Grantham) is the youngest man in the new House of Commons; and Sir W. Vermer, the member for Armagh county, who is in his eighty-third year, is the oldest. The worthy baronet has sat for his county ever since the passing of the Reform Bill, a length of service of which only eight other members can boast; some of these, however, have represented their present constituencies for a much longer period, Mr Williams having been member for Great Marlow for the last forty-four years; and he again is surpassed by the Hon. H. C. Lowther, who has sat for the county of Westmoreland for more than half a century—that is, ever since 1812. Wenlock and Marlborough are notable among the constituencies returning two members, as the only ones of that class that have made no change in their representatives for thirty-three years.

If men go into parliament simply from an

irresistible desire to serve their country, some families are excessively rich in patriotism. The Cavendishes kindly find members for Derbyshire, Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Sussex. Marlborough, Thetford, Huntingdon, and Falmouth are represented by Barings. We find two Peels at Tamworth, another at Huntingdon, and a fourth at Warwick. There are Lowthers in Westmoreland, Cumberland, and York; Grosvenors in Westminster, Chester, and Flint; and Rothschilds in London, Hythe, and Aylesbury. In twenty-six instances, two members of one family have obtained seats in the Commons, and in seven of these the fortunate aspirants stand in the relation of father and son. Altogether, thirty-three families possess seventy-three votes in the Lower House—that is, just one-ninth of the entire number.

In some cases, the square men certainly seem to have got into the round holes. We find soldiers of credit and renown representing agricultural communities, and naval men returned for inland boroughs. The great factory of warlike implements chooses to be represented by an advocate of peace at any price; Cottonopolis, rejecting a disciple of its own political school, opens its arms to a successful lawyer; Lambeth, thriving upon soap, candles, and drain-pipes, becomes enthusiastic in favour of a muscular-christianity novelist; while quiet little Frome attracts to itself a scholar, soldier, and diplomatist. A London auctioneer turns up at Athlone; indeed the migrations of 'city men' intent on parliamentary honours are something wonderful to contemplate; we come across them here, there, and everywhere, till we involuntarily repeat Pope's couplet:

The things we know are neither rich nor rare,  
But wonder how the devil they got there.

## THE MONTH :

### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

ONCE more our learned and scientific societies are opening their sessions, and our winter exhibitions of pictures their doors. As yet, it is too early to say whether any very remarkable discoveries have been made in science; but there is promise of good work and active inquiry; and as regards art, a great treat is in preparation for next spring. In place of the collection of miniature portraits at South Kensington, a National Portrait Exhibition is to be opened in April of 1866 in the arcades overlooking the Horticultural Society's Gardens. This proceeding on the part of the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education will, we doubt not, meet with general approval. Its scope may be judged of from the first two in the series of regulations—namely, 'The Exhibition is specially designed to illustrate English history and the progress of art in England. It may be divided into two or three sections, representing distinct historic periods exhibited in successive years, depending upon the number of portraits received, and the space available for their proper exhibition.'—'It will comprise the portraits of persons of every class who have in any way attained eminence or distinction in England, from the date of the earliest authentic portraits to the present

time, but will not include the portraits of living persons, or portraits of a miniature character.'

The President of the Entomological Society, in his last anniversary address, mentions as one of the signs of the times 'the number of new works, mostly periodicals, some of them newspapers, devoted entirely, or in part, to natural history, and in which entomology figures to a very considerable extent;' and commenting thereon, he continues: 'These, as might be expected, are intended for the many, and they, no doubt, encourage, as well as create, a taste for science. But it is to be regretted that the writers are too often incapable of recognising what is obsolete or exploded, or have only the knowledge which a rapid glance over an old volume might afford.' He then gives instances of this want of knowledge, some of which are ludicrous, and proceeds: 'It would, I think, be very desirable if we could have a cheap series of introductions to the different orders of insects. The classical work of Professor Westwood is not only out of print, but is, perhaps, on too bulky and expensive a scale to meet the popular want. Divided into moderate and convenient portions, and brought down to the present hour, it would form excellent bases for half-a-dozen manuals, which might embrace the whole class of insects.'

A Frenchman has discovered that a good fibre for paper may be produced from the roots of lucerne. There are three varieties of this plant, all equally serviceable. His process is to take up the roots in December, wash them thoroughly, then crush between rollers, and soak for a fortnight to convert into pulp. Paper is already made from the bine of hops and from straw; but if the roots of lucerne can be used for the same purpose, and produced in sufficient quantity, there would be an advantage for the producers of paper, who now complain that rags are scarce and dear. It is said that in the soaking of the roots a salt of soda and a colouring matter are obtained.

As an instance of large effects from comparatively small causes, the following, taken from a lecture on silk by Professor Crace-Calvert, is worth notice: Four ounces of silkworm's eggs will yield from eighty-eight thousand to one hundred and seventeen thousand cocoons; the number of cocoons to a pound of silk is commonly two hundred and seventy; consequently, the produce in silk from the four ounces of eggs will be four hundred and twenty-two pounds.

Coal or petroleum, as a fuel for steam-boats, is still a subject of discussion. On one side, it is contended that the advocates of petroleum greatly exaggerate its value when they assert that one ton of the oil will do as much work as five tons of coal. On the other side, the waste of heat up the chimney of a coal-burning furnace is brought forward as an argument against the use of coal. 'We know,' says Mr Richardson, 'the current of air is so strong that it often carries up cinders and small coal along with it; that the heated gases often take fire by a spark from the furnace, and burn at the top of the funnel with a fierceness almost equalling the flame from a blast-furnace. Is this flame or waste heat employed in creating steam; and how much is the coal utilised? We shall never learn the wicked waste we are making of our coal until petroleum supersedes it.' And as regards the dangerous nature of the oil, he adds, 'if the small amount of spirit which produces the inflammable



vapour were first extracted, the residue—the burning oil and heavy petroleum—would be no more dangerous than so much lard or spermaceti.’

In connection with this subject we may mention that fresh discoveries of petroleum-bearing strata have been discovered in Canada, and large supplies of oil obtained. From Lake Huron down to Point Gaspé, at the mouth of the St Lawrence, oil-springs and oil-wells have been brought to light, and some of them worked to considerable advantage. Great hopes are entertained of the well-wooded Gaspé region, because, being on the sea, it is well situated for export. The richest spot hitherto met with—the Petrolia of Canada—is in the peninsula between lakes Huron and Erie, where oil-springs have long been known; but it is only within the past few years that endeavours have been made to turn them to profit. In the six months ending January 1862, the yield of oil was six thousand two hundred and forty-six barrels: in the corresponding six months, ending January 1863, the quantity rose to fifty-seven thousand five hundred and fifty barrels. Great as the supply is, the demand appears to keep pace with it all over the world. Every month, fresh applications of petroleum, and a further practical knowledge of its chemical constituents, are discovered.

The *Journal* of the Royal United Service Institution, recently published, contains a paper by Captain H. Schaw on *The Employment of Electricity in Military Operations*, which gives valuable information to those interested in the ignition of gunpowder—the electric-telegraph—the electro-ballistic pendulum—and the electric-light. Under these four heads, Captain Schaw summarises processes and results with much clearness; and in describing the telegraph best suited for field-use, he says that ‘the operators should evidently be soldiers, and a certain proportion of the whole of them should be capable of repairing any part of the apparatus which may get out of order, and of tracing out the cause and position of any ordinary fault in the line.’

This result, as is obvious, could only be attained by a certain amount of training; and it appears that ‘such a training is, as far as possible, given to the men of the Royal Engineers selected for this course at Chatham, and they are also instructed in the method of firing mines by electricity.’

The electro-ballistic pendulum is a singularly ingenious instrument for ascertaining the velocity of shot or shell in any part of their course, or at the moment of leaving the mouth of the gun. The instrument comprises a small pendulum swinging freely by the side of a graduated arc of a circle, which is connected with two electro-magnets, one to support the pendulum at the end of the arc, the other to arrest it during its swing. In front of the gun, two open wooden frames are placed, forty feet apart, each frame crossed and recrossed by a wire in connection with the magnets. The shot, when fired, cuts the wire of the nearest frame; the pendulum is at once released, and begins to travel down the arc; but the shot cuts the wire of the second frame, and instantaneously the other magnet arrests the index-hand of the pendulum. The number of degrees through which the pendulum moves corresponds nearly with the forty feet between the two frames, and by applying various corrections, the velocity of a shot at any part of its course ‘can be determined within an extremely minute fraction of absolute exactness.’

Captain Schaw points out the utility of the electric-light to discover the movements of an enemy, or of working-parties on the defences of a besieged place during night; and he explains the mode in which the electric-light is produced. Two small cones of pure carbon are placed with their points nearly touching, and a strong current from a battery is made to pass from one to the other. The carbon ignites, and a brilliant stream of sparks, like a continuous flame, shoots from point to point. But as the carbon is consumed, the distance between the points increases, and the light fails: some method had therefore to be devised to keep the points at a constant distance from each other, and exactly opposite the centre of the reflector. By a combination of an electro-magnet, a spring, and clockwork, the distance between the carbon-points is now so admirably regulated ‘that the variations in the light due to the alternations in the strength of the current are imperceptible, and its brilliancy is practically constant.’ As one improvement almost invariably suggests another, we may expect ere long to hear of further advances in the application of the electric-light to illuminating purposes.

A new method of fertilising has been brought out by two members of the Agricultural Academy at Bonn, which consists in the distribution of a liberal supply of air beneath the surface of a field. A series of pipes fully perforated by small holes is laid in the ground at a depth of from three to six feet, and being connected with a furnace, a constant current is maintained, whereby the subsoil becomes so thoroughly saturated with air, that when communication with the outer air is cut off, the fire continues to burn for a considerable time. By this the air is drawn out of the soil, leaving it ready for another charge; and by repeating the process as often as may be required, a beneficial effect is produced in the increased productiveness of the land.

#### PALMERSTON.

As when men outside stand with silent lips,  
Waiting the change upon a dying face,  
While the descending orb of evening dips  
Lower and lower in the golden space,  
And then a clear round tone, the passing bell,  
Strikes the deep silence of the azure sky,  
How leaps their startled heart within its cell,  
Though well forewarned, to hear the dying die!  
So the sad country, though she named each year  
Of the gray head in all her councils seen,  
And saw the limit of his great career,  
Starts—as the sudden curtain falls between!  
Starts from applanse to see the world pass on,  
The long life finished, and her Statesman gone!

*On Saturday, 2d December, will be finished the Tale  
of*

#### THE CLYFFARDS OF CLYFFE,

*to be followed, in January 1866, by another ORIGINAL  
ROMANCE, entitled*

#### MIRK ABBEY.

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